

An Edge to Bush over Kerry on Some Personal Attributes

George W. Bush has an edge on John Kerry on the personal attributes of compassion, values and likeability, another reason Bush has improved his overall position against Kerry since the Democratic primaries.

Americans by an eight-point margin pick Bush over Kerry as “friendly and likeable” and as “caring and compassionate,” and by a seven-point margin as someone who “shares my values and beliefs,” this ABC News/Washington Post poll finds.

The two are about even (Bush +4, too close for polling tolerances) on another positive attribute, being a “people person,” and they’re also about evenly matched on two negative attributes – being “cold and distant” and having a “boring personality.”

	Bush	Kerry	Bush-Kerry Gap
Positive attributes:			
He is a caring and compassionate person	45	37	+8
He is a friendly and likeable person	44	36	+8
He shares my values and beliefs	45	38	+7
He is a "people person"	45	41	+4
Negative attributes:			
He sometimes seems cold and distant	39	36	+3
He has a boring personality	37	41	-4

These findings are in accord with a separate ABC/Post poll completed April 18, in which Bush was rated more highly than Kerry on attributes such as consistency, truthfulness, trustworthiness and strong leadership. They had about the same rating on “admitting mistakes,” and Kerry was better rated on understanding the problems of average people.

In vote preference in that April 18 poll, Bush and Kerry ran about even head-to-head, with a slight Bush edge with Ralph Nader in the race. That was a bit better for Bush and a bit worse for Kerry compared to a March 7 poll, at the end of the Democratic primary contest.

GROUPS – There are divisions among population groups, with Bush scoring particularly well on these attributes in the South and, naturally, among Republicans. Kerry is strong among Democrats, and does better than Bush on values and likeability among people in low-income households.

There are also differences by age. Bush does better among senior citizens on likeability, values and compassion, while more than half of young Americans call Bush "cold and distant" and give Kerry the edge on likeability and being a "people person."

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone April 21-25, 2004, among a random national sample of 1,021 adults. The results have a 4.5-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html>.

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Full results follow:

1. Please tell me whether the following statement applies more to (George W. Bush/John Kerry), or more to (John Kerry/George W. Bush).

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
a. He is a friendly and likeable person	44	36	6	8	6
b. He sometimes seems cold and distant	39	36	3	12	10
c. He shares my values and beliefs	45	38	2	8	7
d. He is a caring and compassionate person	45	37	4	9	6
e. He has a boring personality	37	41	5	11	5
f. He is a "people person"	45	41	4	6	4

Half sample asked items a-c, other half asked d-f.

END